

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

*Please replace the paragraph starting on line 23 of page eight with the following amended paragraph:*

Included in the device 1 is further a catalyst unit ~~[[28]]~~ 36 for degrading hydrogen peroxide gas withdrawn from the sterilization zone 3.

*Please replace paragraph starting on line 3 of page nine with the following amended paragraph:*

Since the heating air is introduced in the top portion 14 of the heating zone 2 and withdrawn through the outlets 16 in the bottom portion 15, an air flow essentially from top to bottom of the heating zone 2 is ensured. Thus, it is also ensured that air flows past the package 8 from the open end ~~[[11]]~~ 12 towards the closed end ~~[[12]]~~ 11. This one-way air flow reduces the risk of particles and micro organisms whirling about in the heating zone 2.

*Please replace paragraph starting on line 11 of page nine with the following amended paragraph:*

Heating in the heating zone 2 is controlled based on a temperature measured on the inside of the package 8 by means of a package heating temperature sensor ~~[[31]]~~ 32, e.g. an IR temperature sensor. This package heating temperature sensor ~~[[31]]~~ 32 may also be used in a feed-back circuit providing a safety device for the heating. If, for instance, the conveyor belt 10 transporting the packages is stopped, continued heating in the heating zone 2 might lead to melting of e.g. plastic lids on the packages 8. Therefore, if a predetermined high temperature is measured by the inside temperature sensor, hot air will be by-passed via a shunt, thus not raising the

temperature in the heating zone further. When a predetermined low temperature is measured, heating in the heating zone 2 recommences. The predetermined high and low temperature levels are determined based on the properties of the material in the packages 8 and on the hydrogen peroxide content of the sterilizing gas.

*Please replace paragraph starting on line 34 of page ten with the following amended paragraph:*

Gas withdrawn through the outlets 20 in the bottom portion 19 of the sterilization zone 3 is passed through the catalyst unit ~~[[26]]~~ 36 for removing hydrogen peroxide from the gas before being evacuated through the evacuation system of the device 1.

*Please replace paragraph starting on line 1 of page twelve with the following amended paragraph:*

When a production run is finished or when a new run is to begin, the device itself needs to be sterilized. Hot sterile air is then introduced via the nozzles 13 in the heating zone 2 and the inside of the device 1 is heated to approximately 35 °C. When the interior has reached the appropriate temperature, gaseous hydrogen peroxide is introduced in the entire device via the nozzles 17 in the sterilization zone 3. The flow pattern will be different during machine sterilization, i.e. sterilization of the interior of the device 1, as compared to during package sterilization, since the entire interior is to be heated and sterilized. As with package sterilization, sterilizing gas is withdrawn via the catalyst unit ~~[[26]]~~ 36 for destruction of the hydrogen peroxide.